

London

Albemarle Street

May 11. 1770.

Gentlemen



I duly rec^d by Cap^t Gardiner
y^e letter dated March 23^d 1770, written &
address'd to me in consequence of an ap-
pointment of y^e Town of Boston. —

I did not want the bloody proofs in
y^e Narrative you have communicated to me
gives, of the danger & destructive consequences
that must necessarily arise from a Military
establishment posted within the heart of a
Civil Jurisdiction, under such Arrangements
of Command as were attempted to be fix'd
in time of Peace within y^e Colonies.

I had only wonder'd that some thing of this
Sort had not happen'd sooner, & am now
only happy that y^e mischief has not gone
farther — I hope it is not only at an end
but that Like some of those Momentary
Shocks of Nature w^h endanger y^e very be-
ing of the Region where they happen, while
in the Convulsion — it may purge away this
mischief that was y^e Component Cause of
that Danger.

It is a Common thing with Bodies of Men
as well as Individuals standing towards each
other in a State of Irreconcilable variance
to Apprehend from each other mischiefs
w^h neither are capable of Effecting

to Impute to each other Evil designs w^{ch}
neither ever harboured - This state of Mind
leads them by way of Prejudgment, Exculpation
& Recrimination into representations w^{ch} take
their colour rather from imagined than existing
Facts. - But as on occasion of the late shocking
events at Boston, there has been I hope less of
this than on former occasions, so I do not find
People here so much dispos'd. to enquire who
were the Aggressors, What were the Occasions,
What the Mutual provocations in the late Af-
fray, What y^e state of this particular Corp-
tions, as attentive to learn what is y^e State
& Cause of y^e Fever in general w^{ch} they see
brought to this height of Malignancy - &
What may be the Remedy. -

I had long ago given notice, without being
much attended to, that I wou'd lay before
Parliament what I thought to be y^e unconsti-
tutional state of y^e Military establishment
in America. I took advantage from y^e impres-
sions made on Mens Minds by y^e late Events
to bring forward y^e consideration ^{at this Time.}
by Moving that an Humble Address be pre-
sented to his Majesty, stating the necessity
of some Remedy in this Case, & praying that
he wou'd be pleas'd to give directions wth
the Advice of his privy Council, that these
Matters might be revis'd & examin'd into, to
the end that they may be explain'd, corrected
& amended, where they interfer'd or clash'd wth
each other, or contain'd any Matters contrary
to Law & the Constitution.

The Ministry mov'd the Question of Adjournment
upon my Motion, but allowing that the ground
w^{ch} I had taken of Doubts in point of Law
& the Constitution, of Confusion in the Execu-

tion & of Danger in the consequences not only to
the Political Liberty of the Community, but
to the Franchises of the People was good &
Sufficient, & did call for some remedy in
the Case, & ^{having} declared that His Majesty had
given Directions to have the Question of Law
laid before the Crown Lawyers, & the matter
to be revised & amended upon that Foundation
that I should appear to be right & legal; &
that in general every thing that the Address
did or could desire would be done in Conse-
quence thereof. Upon this our friends, tho'
they did not think fit to withdraw the
Motion for the Address, yet did not
think proper to divide, as considering it
best to hold the Ministers pledged by
their Declaration & our Acquiescence under
it. — & I own I think, as do many of your
Friends here, with whom I have communica-
ted upon this Occasion, that it would be
wise in you in Point of Policy to give
Credit to this Declaration, & to suspend
all Opposition on this Point as considering
the Ministry having pledged themselves to
rectify it according to Law & the Consti-
tution; especially as you are now free from
all Danger of any evil Consequence arising
from it, as the Ministry have declared that
as the Troops are now withdrawn, so they
shall never be sent back until the Civil
Magistrate, shall call for & employ their
Aid in Support of the Civil Government
which I should guess is never likely to happen.
As I have said before that there was no
Disposition amongst people here to enquire
into the particular Actions & transaction
in the late Catastrophe at Boston

So you will find that no Notice has been taken
either by Ministry or Opposition of any of the
Events w^{ch} have arisen on this occasion, otherwise
than to look to the Cause in general & the
remedy - Yet one Observation I think it just
to make to you, that One Sentiment has
unanimously arisen in the Minds of all
expressed in a wish & Hope from all Quarters
that no Prejudice, Resentment, or party
Consideration whatsoever may operate in
the unhappy Case of Cap^t Preston & the
Soldiers, but on the contrary it would do
more Honor to the Spirit & Temper of your
People to shew Mercy, than to exact se-
vere Justice.

I beg you to mark my respects to T^r Town &
to assure them of my readiness in all cases & upon
all occasions to engage in their service

I beg you Gentlemen to accept my parti-
cular respects -

I am Gentlemen

Y^r most Obed^t

Most humble

To The Hon^{ble} James Bowdoin Esq^r

To Sam^l Pemberton Esq^r

Joseph Warren Esq^r

Committee of T^r Town of Boston.

J^l Howard

London May 15. 1770
Thom^s Gennally Letter